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ABSTRACT

The first African American Child Welfare Summit convened to discuss the phenomenon of the disproportionate rate of out-of-home placement of African American children and the implications for African American families and communities. Summit participants set several goals for themselves, including the development of a vision for reducing out-of-home placements and obtaining consensus on strategies tailored toward building and strengthening diverse alliances and coalitions to address the problem of placement. To guide the process, papers were commissioned on: (1) child protection risk assessment; (2) the relationship between education and the child welfare system; (3) an Afrocentric approach to child welfare; and (4) current system reform agendas. After hearing the commissioned papers, participants reached a consensus on the elements of the vision of the future African American community as a group of people with a shared vision and heritage. They then turned their attention to child welfare system issues and a new perspective on out-of-home placement. The group agreed that risk assessment plays a significant role in the increasing number of African American children in out-of-home care. The summit served as a catalyst and initiator of a self-reflective and self-development process for African American professionals seeking to decrease the rate of out-of-home placement of African American children and youths. Two appendixes list participants and trace the history of Black Administrators in Child Welfare, Inc. (Contains five references.) (SLD)

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